

BERMUDA POSTAL HISTORY: FORERUNNERS TO THE UPU



DAVID PITTS WITH HIS DISPLAY TO THE ROYAL PHILATELIC SOCIETY LONDON



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BRITISH WEST INDIES STUDY CIRCLE

OBJECTIVES

- 1 TO promote interest in and the study of the stamps and postal history of the islands that comprise the British West Indies and in addition BERMUDA, BRITISH GUIANA (GUYANA) and BRITISH HONDURAS (BELIZE) and the Postal History and markings of all other Caribbean territories during any period that they were under British administration or control, and those British Post Offices which operated in the Caribbean, and Central or South America.
- 2 TO issue a quarterly BULLETIN containing articles, items of interest and other features of BWI interest. The BWISC BULLETIN was presented with the ABPS Specialist Society journal Award in 2004.
- 3 TO encourage, assist or sponsor the authorship and publication of definitive handbooks, monographs or other works of reference appropriate to the aims of the Circle. The BWISC has published over 20 books or Study Papers over the last 12 years, some of which have received prestigious awards.
- 4 TO hold an annual auction for the sale of members' material. Normally, prior to the auction, the BWISC holds its Annual General Meeting.
- 5 TO organise occasional display meetings including a biennial weekend Convention and bourse. This offers further opportunities for members to buy and sell material.
- 6 TO maintain an internet website where information about Circle activities is publicised and where much other relevant information is posted.
- 7 TO maintain a specialised library from which home members can borrow books.

**Opinions expressed in articles in this Bulletin are those of the authors
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SOCIETY PROGRAMME OF EVENTS & INFORMATION

MEETINGS & EVENTS

Saturday 11 June 2016 Circle table at Swinpex, St Joseph's RC college, Ocotal Way, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN3 3LR, 10am-4pm.

Wednesday 14 to Saturday 17 September 2016 — Autumn Stampex, BDC Islington, London, N10 0QH
 Saturday 17 September, Informal Study Circle meeting & displays at 2pm. Members are very much encouraged to attend this relaxed and popular meeting, and to bring some sheets to display if they can.

Thursday 13 October 2016 The President of the Royal Philatelic Society has asked Michael Medicott to mount a solo display to the Society. He has chosen 'Classic Revenues of the British West Indies' as his subject and would greatly appreciate the support of Circle members able to attend.

Subject to any last minute changes Michael intends to show, Antigua, British Guiana, British Honduras, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Leeward Islands, Montserrat, Nevis, St. Christopher, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Tobago and Trinidad. Two other members are scheduled to show Jamaica jointly in 2017, so Michael will try to avoid overlap with their chosen material.

Saturday 15 October 2016 Circle table at Scotex, Dewars Centre, Glover Street, Perth, 10am—3.30pm.
 (<http://www.spta-scotex.com/>)

Wednesday 8 March 2017 Richard Maisel will be presenting his Br. Guiana at the Collectors Club in New York

Saturday 22nd April 2017 AGM and Auction at Grosvenor, 399-401 Strand, 2nd & 3rd floors, WC2R 0LT

Saturday 14 — Sunday 15 October 2017 BWISC Convention at The Abbey Hotel, Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 9BE.

Congratulations to Bill Gibb and Chris Rainey for making FRPSL.

Congratulations to the following members for their awards at CHICAGOPEX 2015.

Reserve Grand and Gold for David Pitts Bermuda Postal History
Gold for Paul Larsen Leeward Is. GV Postal Stationery (single frame)

In February our members featured at ARIPEX 2016 in Mesa, Arizona, congratulations to them all.

Gold medals were awarded to:

David Pitts Bermuda:	Postal History From The Early Days to The UPU plus Collectors Club of Chicago Philatelic Exhibitor's Award and British Caribbean Philatelic Study Group Multi-frame Award
David Cordon Bermuda:	1865–1901 plus Lighthouse Stamp Society Award
David Cordon	Study of Bermuda King George V "Key Plates" plus Creativity in Philatelic Exhibiting Medal and APS Medal of Excellence
David Cordon	The Bermuda Dock Issue (single frame)

A Vermeil medal was awarded to:

John Wynns	Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee Issues of British Guiana (AAPE Gold award of honor)
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AUCTION REPORT 2016

BY SIMON GOLDBLATT

An auction in which only about 55% of the lots on offer were sold, and total realisations fell short of estimates by nearly 4½% raises questions to be addressed. That is to say, addressed by BWISC standards, because a goodly few auctioneers would be over the moon to sell 55% and to exceed 95% of estimate. So are we losing our way in the auction? Do we need a change of approach or policy? Are members tiring of the material customarily offered? We must examine the course of the auction and try to answer.

The Anguilla tiny section of 5 lots was an experiment, classifying the Tercentenary issue under this heading. Lot 1 sold, the other four did not. We should possibly conclude that Anguillan noses were put out of joint in the first place by having their celebration vaunted under a St Kittsian banner, and St Kittsians experienced the same continuous disfigurement from the subsequent departure of Anguilla. Hands up those who genuinely think that Britain will be better off by leaving Europe.

Antigua sold with reasonable interest, but without real animation. Indeed, this was very much the pattern of the sale as a whole. If we look at statistics, just about 30% of the lots were covered on the auction book at the start, so that room bidders added a further quarter of the total number; but a very large number of lots went to the opening bidder without opposition. That of itself would produce shortfalls between 20 and 25% of estimate for the lots affected and would take a great deal of making up for the rest.

Just over half of the 31 lots sold there, and Bahamas with 39 lots sold two thirds. In 24 out of 26 cases, sales were guaranteed from book bids, and this was by far the most strongly supported territory in advance of the event. Actual opposition in live bidding was minimal; in only 3 cases was the book limit defeated.

If room intervention in Barbados was more noticeable, contest was not. Only one member seemed seriously ready to take on the book, and most captures in the room were of lots with no one to challenge. So a quantity more selling between 75 and 80% of estimate, but who knows how far a room bidder will go if pressed, and 31 sold out of 49 nears respectability.

In Barbuda, 9 lots were on offer, which is more than we usually rustle up, and 7 of them sold including the Codrington letter (Lot 120) at its full reserve of £240. As the auctioneer paused to see if anyone would beat that, our President offered to pay £200. When lots are offered at reserve, we don't necessarily put the figure forward as the auction team's view of the right price, so it was gratifying to hear the President coming close.

Bermuda sold 9 lots out of 31, 6 of these on the book, little sign of room interest but Bermudian enthusiasts are picky and why not? – when they can aspire to Postmaster stamps if they have the means.

British Guiana – 53 lots, 37 sold, so this was more like it, except that bidders absent and present continued reluctant to take one another on. While 18 sales went above estimate, not many of these reflected live battles in the room. Still it was comforting to see that the mishap of describing Lot 195 and illustrating 196 made no difference to the result for the two Girl Pat items, each of which attained a healthy £210. A little bird told us that both had not got half as far in a recent London major auction. Well, there are two lots which didn't lower our standards or perceptions.

In British Honduras 16 lots were sold out of 22, of which the room took home 11, including overtopping the book limit in 3 cases. Perhaps a starting battle over the two significant pre-stamp covers at 213 and 214 had stirred things up. Hammer prices were £260 and £270, a score draw between book and room. The auction had now reached the earlier of the two breaks.

Upon resumption neither auctioneer nor other attendees showed signs of flagging, though it was clear that any excitement aroused before the interval had died away. Cayman Islands to Guyana offered 78 lots. 19 bids on the book, 30 sales, the transaction of business lacklustre.

So on to Jamaica with 83 lots fully described (47 of which sold) and a further 43 for blind bulk-buying, which was another experiment. Three illustrated items stood out, and Lots 315, 322, 323 respectively, realised £300, £230, £130, well within a predictable range. Yet, of the three, the least costly (manuscript cancelled, Middle Quarters) is the one to watch. It could not be rated above A79 in value, as it is far more obscure and A79 is in greater demand; all the same with its rarity properly understood, value can only go upwards and may have a long way to go. Of the 47 lots sold in the 'open' section of Jamaica, 25 went in the room. Though we often see a higher proportion sold live several of our regulars did not attend, and one can assume that they took part. Lot 344 (the swallowtail) was one of those modern varieties that catch the eye, a minor skirmish only, but one could feel those present enjoying it, while wondering who would win.

Bidding in the 'blind' section was interesting. Great care was taken to prevent sneak preview, and it is claimed that the only person present who thought he had got a peek, chose the wrong lot. Another possible only person seems to have picked Lot 413 for an economical shot at the bonus prize, because a starter of £4 rises cheaply and quickly to a competitive percentage. It was a successful ploy, although the energies of bidder B132 to run this rival up might easily have put a spanner in the works. At bonus Lot 434 we reached the second interval and the auctioneer announced the winner on the spot. This was later challenged quietly by another member who believed that the bonus award was available to be calculated against every lot sold in the sale. Well, it wasn't, but it's an idea for the future. Tell us what you think.

Absent bidding was alarmingly slow to arrive for the last third of the sale. With about 8 days to go, only 15 lots from Montserrat to the end had the assurance of book bid, and a sure sale. True, the interval between catalogue distribution and auction day was fairly short this year – but, why oh why, folks, do you need to keep the auctioneer on tenterhooks until the last moment? 6% coverage of a major slice of the auction with 8 days to go could induce suicidal thoughts in a less robust individual. Is that what most of you would wish? Late bidding loses priority and risks administrative slip-ups under pressure.

Leeward Islands sold 14 out of 27 which would be a predictable outcome in most years. Then to Martinique and at Lot 460 a stranger's hand shot up with the solitary bid. A polite debate ensued. This was a gentleman whom Simon had invited to spectate, but he had been accorded a bidding card. The auctioneer therefore ruled that his bid could stand; and at the end, he decided to join us. As a previous non-member had been allowed to take part in the blind section on condition that he became a member if he secured something (which he did) the auction itself has secured us two new members.

Montserrat to St Kitts, inclusive, showed up a dearth of book bids: just 5 emerged, and one of these was trumped, so that a total of 26 sales out of 56 lots deserves commendation, not regret. The pattern of the auction seemed to be established by now. St Lucia and St Vincent sold 42 lots out of 75. Tobago and Trinidad together, 28 out of 42, and we settled down for a quiet and unspectacular ending to the day's events.

If we thought so, we were wrong. Lot 654 opened at £23 (nothing on the book) and was fought centimetre by centimetre up to £105. 657 opened (similarly) at £30 and here the battle royal over Salt Cay ended at £140. Another score draw between two rivals, we understand, and in both cases the ratio of price to estimate was identical, 3.5:1.

Having come to expect little or nothing from Virgin Islands (Simon has trodden a relatively lonely furrow in this area for decades) we were now to see quite significant money paid for a few quite serious stamps. 9 sales out of 19 lots, where 3 might have been par for the course.

With 21 lots left, 2 covered on the book, we were not yet finished. About half of those attending to bid were staying to the end and two thirds of the final section found a willing buyer. To one's recollection this has never happened before, at such a late stage of the auction.

A few more statistics to add: 53 book bidders, down by perhaps a dozen. Individual bids largely lacked spread and ambition. Limits were usually less lavish. Indeed, for all the sales at minimum level, residual book capacity at the end was only about £4,000, when it has in the past been as high as five times that amount. AGM and auction attendance was a bit down on last year; apologies for absence possibly make the difference.

There is no current indication that Simon is losing his grip, due to advancing years, though he can be heard to protest the contrary, and the close of the sale was marked with applause, which may have been relief at reaching the end, although the fact that proceedings started on the dot at 2.15, and finished on the dot at 5.45, simply reflected Simon's standard estimated time to sell 697 lots or thereabouts, with two intervals interposed. He claims he does not look at his watch – should we believe it?

BWI

RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR HELP REGARDING SHIPPING LINES AND ROUTES

BY IAN JAKES

I read Michael Oliver's request in BWISC Bulletin No.248 March 2016 pages 6 and 7 for help regarding shipping lines and routes. I had no expectation that I would be writing this article, if only because I know absolutely nothing about shipping lines and routes. Michael tells me that he purchased the covers separately for less than £20 each when covers were of little philatelic value or interest other than ship names. There are, of course, two sets each consisting of two books in the BWISC Library (reference 1.4 'History of the Sailing Packets to the West Indies' Britnor 1973 and reference 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 The Maritime History of the British Isles, Robertson 1955) which have never been loaned out by me since I become librarian in 2002. These books give information, especially ship names, not found in more recent publications. Unfortunately the books are very heavy making postage prohibitively expensive. There appears to have been expert interest in ship names for more than 60 years. Michael tells me that he has had good responses to his request and that the routes and dates on the covers all agree with scheduled services. I have looked in the BWISC Library, but cannot find reference in any book to the existence of any of the four steam ships named on the covers. This makes Michael's four covers even more exciting. We might be witnessing new evidence about steamship lines in the Caribbean.

But has anyone else given any thought to the fact that one or more of the four covers might be forged?

My experience of the general traits of forgers is as follows:

- (a) They are experts in their field of operation.
- (b) They make forgeries because they have connections with potential buyers.
- (c) Alterations will only be made if they result in a profit to the forger.
- (d) Alterations to the original are as inconspicuous as possible.
- (e) Only necessary alterations to the original are made. Unnecessary alterations increase the chance of discovery of the misdeed.

I will comment on each of the four covers in turn. Any member who disagrees with any of my opinions should explain why, giving details of their own reasoning in the next Bulletin. In this way philatelic knowledge is increased. I am big enough and old enough to take the philatelic abuse if I am wrong.



Fig. 1. June 1881, Kingston Jamaica to New York

The dodgy looking postmarks on the Kingston — New York cover (Fig. 1.) troubled me. I considered whether the stamp, apparently deliberately, affixed to the cover at an angle near the edge of the envelope with the A01 cancel only just extending beyond the stamp, could be a replacement stamp and could include a hand drawn extension of the cancel onto the cover. Michael believes that the whole of the A01 cancel is genuine and has not been doctored in any way. The Kingston datestamp just misses the handwritten address on the cover. I am always suspicious about such near misses. I like to know whether the datestamp has been applied to the cover before or after the writing of the address i.e. whether the datestamp is over or under the handwriting. Such information helps with authenticity or otherwise. We cannot read the name of the ship on the front of the cover. It could be either S.S. *Athos* or *Ashos*. A forger would make sure that his buyer could read the name of the ship on the front of the cover. In fact there is nothing inconspicuous, or otherwise, on the front of the cover to lead me to believe that any crafty alteration has been made. There are three marks on the back of the cover, none of which I recognise. A forger would not make three marks. He would make one at most, and probably none at all. I repeat that unnecessary alterations are not part of the forger's armoury. In the BWISC Library I found a scan of the front of a similar cover showing an identical A01 cancel just extending onto the cover beyond the stamp and a datestamp bearing a different date, but otherwise identical to the one on Michael's cover. I come to the conclusion that the cover shown in Fig. 1 is genuine.



Fig. 2. June 1882, Trinidad to Halifax, Nova Scotia

The Nova Scotia cover (Fig. 2.) shows a Trinidad stamp purportedly cancelled by Aleong and Proud's D8 Port of Spain GPO cancel. The postmark is a forgery (the 'N' in 'TRINIDAD' and the '2' in '82' are both wrong, unless the illustration in 'The Postal History of Trinidad and Tobago' by Aleong and Proud is itself inaccurate). This means that the whole cover is suspect. A cheap used SG76 4d. grey stamp has been cleaned by removing the original postmark. The stamp has then been affixed to a plain envelope.

The name of the fictitious ship and the fictitious address have then been added, with the forger ensuring that the 'E' in 'Esq.' extends onto the stamp. The two forged postmarks have then been added. There is only a receiving mark on the reverse of the cover. This is a simple, but effective, forgery.

However, Michael tells me that the ship *Viola* is not fictitious. It was on charter to the Quebec Steamship Co. The cover is backstamped with a CDS of Halifax dated 14 June. I have mentioned in the Bulletin in the past that a few of the postmarks in Aleong and Proud are not completely accurate. I have previously asked members with knowledge to provide a full list of these defective postmarks, so far without result. I am sure that one of our Trinidad specialists will know whether Trinidad D8 is accurately recorded in Aleong and Proud. If it is not, then this cover may well be genuine.



Fig. 3. April 1894, Belize to New York via New Orleans

This cover is also a forgery, but made in a completely different way to the forgery in Fig. 2. Imagine the scene, perhaps 50 years ago. A stamp collector, with an interest in ship covers, visits his local dealer, asking to purchase ship covers. The dealer has none for sale. A month later the stamp collector visits the stamp dealer again. The dealer now has the *GAMBETTA* cover shown in Fig. 3, which the collector quickly and excitedly buys without even looking at the rear of the cover to see if there are any additional marks which might add to the story.

How did the dealer acquire this cover? A possible scenario follows. The dealer looks through his box of commercial covers and comes across the cover from S. Wolffsohn, Auctioneer which had been sent by post from Belize on AP 26 94 to Edward Clarke in New York via the official postal service. At this time the words 'Per S.S. *GAMBETTA*' are not on this, otherwise genuine, commercial cover. The dealer had been trying to sell this cover for some time for a nominal sum, without success, probably because there is nothing remarkable about this cover to entice any stamp collector to buy it. The dealer then makes the decision to add the words 'Per S.S. *GAMBETTA*' to effect a sale to his ship cover client.

We now need to analyse what I say is a forged addition of 'Per S.S. *GAMBETTA*' to a genuine commercial cover. We will start with the handwriting 'Per S.S.'. The forger will obtain either a quill or a pen nib which writes in the same thickness as the handwritten address on the commercial cover. He will then mix ink powder and water to obtain the same shade of ink used on the commercial cover. The forger will then practise the forged handwriting on a separate piece of paper, only for the forger to realise that a forged endorsement on the commercial cover will not look realistic. Note that the 'S.S.' being part of the forged endorsement differs from the 'S' forming part of the address on the commercial cover. The forger's inability to forge the handwriting may have also resulted in the use of the handstamp *GAMBETTA* which then does not have to be written in the style of the handwritten address on the cover.

Now let us look at the handstamp *GAMBETTA*. This handstamp was kept either in the shipping company's office, or in the forger's house or stamp shop. The *GAMBETTA* overprint looks fairly new and fresh. I would have expected it to be more worn if it was used regularly in a shipping office. The overprint *GAMBETTA* was placed on the cover before the handwriting 'Per S.S.'. The forged vertical endorsement on the left front of the cover extends quite beautifully into the space available and the handwriting is the same height as the *GAMBETTA* overprint. The forger has made an additional, but unnecessary, alteration which has proved the forgery. He has underlined the whole of the forged phrase 'Per S.S. *GAMBETTA*'. '*GAMBETTA*' would not be underlined unless the handstamp was already present. Unless the inverted commas round

'*GAMBETTA*' form part of the overprint, the forger will have also placed the inverted commas with ink around the word '*GAMBETTA*'.

Michael tells me that this cover is back stamped with a CDS of New Orleans dated 30 April. This does not surprise me. This was a genuine commercial cover before the forged overprint was made, and was likely to be back stamped with a CDS en route.



Fig. 4. November 1909, Grenada to New York

The Grenada — New York cover includes forged Grenada G.P.O. postmarks which immediately makes this cover suspect. The forger has written the ship name and the address on the cover first. Unused, inexpensive, and probably surplus to requirement, Grenada stamps are then affixed to the envelope, care being taken to tie the ship's name to the cover by affixing one of the stamps over the underlining of the ship's name, and then adding two faint postmarks over the ships name and the stamp. The remaining two stamps are tied by clear double cancellations, one on top of the other, to disguise, as with the faint cancels, that all postmarks are forged. Michael tells me that there are no markings on the back of this cover. My Grenada covers to New York for this period each bear a New York arrival mark on the reverse, which I would have expected to see on this cover if it was genuine. As Michael states a New York arrival mark can be omitted by mistake. However the moral of the tale is to inspect both sides of a cover before you buy.



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St Lucia

1949 6ct orange vertical lower left corner pair on local FDC, cancelled at Soufriere, imperforate between stamps and the left margin. Eight examples were found, of which two were damaged. A similar cover appeared in our 4.12.2008 auction and sold for £10200. BPA Certificate (1956). SG 151/CW 32a

£9,000

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ANTIGUA

BOOK REVIEW

BY PETER BROOKS

‘ANTIGUA—The Stamps and Postal History’ By Charles Freeland, FRPSL and John M. Jordan

Some forty—five years ago, when I had little more than a schoolboy stamp collection, a series of articles by E.V.Toeg appeared in the Stamp Monthly headed ‘Why not collect Antigua?’ I was encouraged to do so and soon joined the BWISC and the BCPSG. At the time a group of collectors in the U.S.A. were publishing provisional chapters in their Journal hoping to make them the basis of a handbook on Antigua. The handbook never appeared but I owed much to those collectors for their work, support, encouragement and friendship.

Now we do have a splendid handbook on Antigua stamps and postal history. The authors acknowledge that this work is built on the foundation of those earlier efforts, but they have added much to make this an essential tool for all who would collect Antigua with serious intent. Indeed any philatelist would enjoy reading this lavishly illustrated, well written and excellently produced book. Charles Freeland, John Jordan and Peter Ford are to be congratulated.

The book begins with a brief description of the island and its history with further references to the historical background in so far as this affected early postal history. That postal history is fascinating in itself but fully covered for the collector with chapters on the handstruck postal markings found on both packet and ship letters. There is a brief mention (page 10) of packet letters receiving markings of the port of arrival and the later Maritime Mail chapter (page 253) explains this further. A description of the Falmouth Packet Letter handstamps applied to ‘loose’ packet letters with illustrations would have been helpful as they are found on letters from Antigua and are much sought after. The boxed PACKET LETTER which performed the same purpose was probably applied in London (illustrated on page 254).

The first stamps to be used in Antigua were those of Great Britain in the period 1858 — 60 and the chapter on these is followed by a very full description of the first Antigua issues, the Queen Victoria stamps produced from the same 1d and 6d plates from 1862 to 1890. Here is all that the collector of these issues needs except perhaps for the extremist flospecker. Nearly every stamp on the 1d sheet can be plated and many on the 6d. On the 6d the large blob of colour on the right leg of the first ‘A’ of ‘ANTIGUA’ at position 74 is more obvious than some plate varieties that are listed. Later other values were printed from the De La Rue key plates.

The stamps of the following reigns are comprehensively covered. There is a chapter on Revenue Stamps. Here as throughout the illustrations are excellent and give these stamps an appeal that may encourage others to collect them.

Postal stationery is well covered. There are chapters on Registration Services and Maritime Mail, Consignment Tables and an adequate section on postal rates.

The chapter on Post Offices and Postmarks satisfies in every way. Clear illustrations, excellent descriptions and set out in chronological order with full details of the village post offices. There is a useful resumé of Antigua marks at the end of the chapter. Date ranges of postmarks are always subject to extension. For example OP1 has an EKD of 8 April 1891 and OP2 an EKD of 13 January 1908 (page 189). S16 (page 186): Proud is right to give a LKD for this postmark as 1938. A similar postmark but without the dots and the full stop equidistant between ST and JOHNS is also known in this period from 1933. The year date in full (as illustrated) is known only in 1932. S17 is best distinguished by the smaller letters and figures in the date.

Compared to the excellent and detailed chapters on World War 2 Censor Markings and on the U.S. Postal Services on the Island in the same war, the chapter on Air Mails is a disappointment. Air Mail is a significant area of postal history and deserved more despite its complexity. Tables of Air Mail rates such as in Michael Oliver’s Leeward Islands book (to which reference is made) could have been

revised and included. Interestingly, Antigua enjoyed what must have been the lowest Air Mail rate ever when in 1943, under an agreement with British West Indies Airways, rates to some other islands in the Caribbean were reduced by as much as 80% to 2½d per ½oz all in, the same rate as surface mail for letters up to 1oz.

There is always human interest in postal history. In Appendix C there are lists of many of the postmasters both in St Johns and in the village offices. The Freetown list is headed by the Revd William Unsworth who served from 1907 to 1910. He was uncle to the late Harold Green, a long time member of the BWISC. He helped me greatly in an area of Antigua philately that the book does not deal with Leeward Island stamps were the only stamps available in the island from 1890 to 1903 and continued in concurrent use with Antigua issues until 1956. The authors refer the reader to Michael Oliver's book to cover those issues. Leeward Island stamps do figure in the Barbuda section as they were overprinted BARBUDA for use in Antigua's sister island.

A letter to a Revd. John Rigaud is illustrated on page 36. Any Old Westminsters among us will recognise the name. No doubt the letter concerned a relation, the Revd. Stephen Rigaud, who had been consecrated Bishop of Antigua in 1858 but died of yellow fever after only a few months on the island.

It is to indulge in nit-picking to point out one or two glitches.

P.23 Type PD is also known as a receiving mark.

P.253 Letters are found with packet marks and ship letter markings from 1782 to 1789 (not just 1788)

P.281 'No internal postal rate existed before 1891'. This is incorrect. There was a 1d rate from at least 1880 onwards.

At the end of the book there is an excellent bibliography and many references to other books and articles within the text itself and in footnotes.

This book is a welcome and worthy addition to the BWISC list of publications.

JOHN & MARK TAYLOR

Jamaica 1938

Die Proof of the 1st printing on watermarked paper.



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NEW BOOKS FROM BWISC PUBLICATIONS!

'ANTIGUA - THE STAMPS AND POSTAL HISTORY'

by Charles Freeland, FRPSL and John Jordan

Coming so early in the alphabet Antigua has always been one of the most popular of the small Caribbean islands. It has an interesting mix of early stamps printed by Perkins Bacon and De La Rue including a number of rarities. On the postal history front Antigua is especially well endowed, with the Codrington and Tudway estate correspondences. There is also a rich variety of early postal markings, including some unique marks. The original inspiration for this book was the Antigua Monograph published in successive issues of the British Caribbean Philatelic Journal over a 15 year period between 1973 and 1988. This book collates all this information, updates it and presents it in a most readable form.



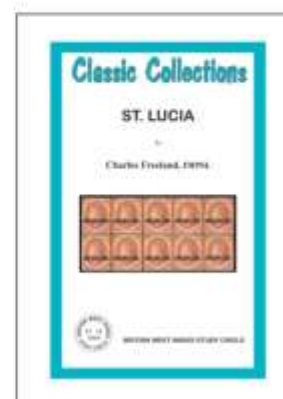
A4 size, hardbacked with dust jacket, (x) + 299 pages. ISBN: 978-1-907481-25-3

PRICE: £37.00. BWISC Members' Discount: £4.00.

'CLASSIC COLLECTIONS - ST. LUCIA'

by Charles Freeland, FRPSL.

This book is a continuation of the series highlighting the finest BWI collections. Freeland's St. Lucia is the definitive collection with much material from the pre-stamp era, the St. Lucia Steam Conveyance Company, the early Perkins Bacon issues through to the De La Rue keyplate issues. More modern stamps are not neglected and there are sections on the Postal Fiscals as well as the Postal Stationery. Illustrated in full colour throughout, this is a worthy successor to the previous Classic Collections publications.



B5 size, saddle-stitched, 36 pages. ISBN: 978-1-907481-31-4

PRICE: £10.00. BWISC Members' Discount: £2.00.

BERMUDA

**BERMUDA POSTAL HISTORY: FORERUNNERS TO THE UPU
5PM DISPLAY TO THE ROYAL PHILATELIC SOCIETY LONDON
BY BWISC MEMBERS DAVID PITTS FRPSL AND
DR ART GROTEN FRPSL (CURATOR), 28 APRIL 2016**

BY CHARLES FREELAND



Left to right Frank Walton, RPSL President, Dr. Art Groten and David Pitts

90 RPS members, including almost a dozen BWISC members, were present to hear David Pitts and Art Groten talk about their spectacular display of early Bermuda postal history (LP members can access the full 45 minute talk on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywmFJxjW1Xcnd> and view his slides on http://www.rpsl.org.uk/documents/displays/DISP_20160428_001.pdf). For those who have not been following our columns closely, this exhibit has won a Grand Award in a regional US show and in 2014 was awarded a large gold medal at the Rio International. No previous Bermuda collector, no matter how distinguished, has previously won large gold for a Bermuda exhibit.

For those who attended our 60th Anniversary display in the same august rooms, the exhibit was relatively familiar, with five Postmaster stamps, the famous 1875 Moncrieff cover, the cover to London franked with two Penny Blacks and the earliest recorded letter from Bermuda in private hands. There were, however, at least two significant recent additions to the display: the earliest known cover from Bermuda, which was 1620 in our 2014 show, had been replaced by one dated 1617 and the 1863 cover to New Brunswick franked with an American-style Paid at Ireland Island recently sold by Spink (see my article in 'Bermuda around the Salerooms').

Those who made the trek to the Royal were rewarded by collecting a 56 page full colour handout that comprised the whole of David's 5 frame exhibit collection mounted on double Godden pages on which the collection is mounted for competition. This did not mirror the slides that he showed, which contained the highlights on which his remarks were based. These were divided into five main sections: forerunners to 1806, internal mail, military mail, ship letters and packet letters.

During a short but interesting Q&A session, David Beech asked who was Moncrieff (I had assumed he was a Scot despite his Pall Mall address on the famous cover). Beech then dropped a bombshell...he revealed that Moncrieff was also the recipient of a cover from the Falkland Islands in the same hand and to the same address. An early example of philatelic mail then? It is certainly correctly franked at 7d for mail routed via New York, but if the regular 1d red was available why all those provisionals? The last digit of the year date is a little smudged but it looks like 1875.



David Feldman
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British West Indies sought after for our November auction series



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BAHAMAS

QV ONE SHILLING GREEN WITH MANUSCRIPT 'SPECIMEN'

BY PETER FERNBANK

I recently came across this stamp on eBay (Fig. 1). Examples of Specimens with genuine manuscript cancellations do exist but obviously they can be fabricated even today so I was initially somewhat cautious. On the other hand I had a feeling I had seen a Specimen with this handwriting before and therefore decided to take a chance and purchased it for a modest sum.

A couple of months later I stumbled across the example I thought I had remembered (Fig. 2) – it was the copy from De La Rue's Works Specimen File, dated above 'July 1863', which had been cut from the file and subsequently mounted on the first page of the Bahamas section of the De La Rue Album. The style of writing is distinctive and these two 'Specimen' m/s cancellations are virtually identical to my eye



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.

It was not until the 1880s that De La Rue began overprinting the word 'Specimen' on stamps. Prior to that there are a number of instances where m/s cancellations are encountered and I assume the endorsement was made by a member of De La Rue's staff. A slightly unusual facet of the example in figures 1 & 2 is that 'Specimen' is written directly over the value tablet, effectively obscuring it. Has anyone seen other examples of Specimens in this handwriting style within BWI territories (or any other colony for that matter)?

My thanks to Steve Jarvis for supplying a reproducible quality illustration from the De La Rue Album.

Articles wanted for future Bulletins
Anything West Indies related considered

JAMAICA

LORRIMERS 'REGISTERED' OVAL 1950

BY DAVID HORRY



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.

If you'll forgive the oxymoron, there is no shortage of rare KGV postmarks which emanate from Jamaica but I have finally turned up a Lorrimers 'Registered' Oval dated 1 September 1950 (Fig. 1.). This is a postmark that I have never seen before — not even in Derek Sutcliffe's collection. It was initially recorded in America by Bob Topaz in the BPCJ, back in the Sixties as ERD 12 September 1950 and LRD 1 November 1950. Thomas Foster stated that he had never seen one either. Hugh James and Ian Potter added no new dates — however, Ted Proud did manage to illustrate a new LRD 10 January 1951. I have attempted a new rendering now that a complete postmark is at last available (Fig. 2)

The so-called 'Registered' Ovals have become my speciality and range from common at Buff Bay, Lucea (*Lucy*) and Williamsfield to very rare, as in the case of Lorrimers, Gordon Town and Vineyard Town. There are some 28 ROs to be found in Jamaica and most are considered rather scarce. They were not released through the Kingston G.P.O. but were most likely introduced to Jamaica by George Odom, who also went by the name L. Barrington Smith.

The Lorrimers Post Office opened in October 1931 with a Jamaica Double Circle (JDC). This instrument was brought back into use at least by 20 February 1951 after the RO was discarded in early 1951. (Fig. 3) I visited the remote Lorrimers Post Office, in Trelawny Parish, in March 2015 and here's a picture of it located in a private house. (Fig. 4). If you have such a rarity I would like to hear from you.



Fig. 4.

Both the stamps illustrated were found in a mixed stock book collection sold on eBay by a dealer from Stevenage.



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MINUTES OF THE 62ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BWISC HELD AT 1:15PM SATURDAY 23RD APRIL 2016

1. Chairman's Welcome and Opening Remarks

The meeting was opened by Peter Ford who welcomed the 25 BWISC members present. He thanked Spink for their hospitality in allowing BWISC to hold our AGM on their premises. He invited each person to introduce themselves and their collecting interests.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Roy Bond, Brian Brooks, Ron Cronin, Kevin Darcy, Peter Fernbank, Mary Gleadall, Terry Harrison, Simon Kelly, James Podger, and John Riggall.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting on 25 April 2015, as published in Bulletin No. 245, June 2015, pages 33 to 36, were accepted by the attendees.

4. Report by the General Secretary (George Dunbar)

The Circle attended Europhilex London 2015 and Midpex 2015 where we took tables. I am grateful to the members who helped support these tables, notably Stephen King and Alister Kinnon, in addition to Committee members.

The Circle will attend Worpex, Swinpex and Scotex later this year, where we are taking tables. Nigel Chandler and Simon Goldblatt will represent the Circle at Essen, and BWISC is sharing a stand with the BCPSG and the Bermuda Collectors Society at New York 2016.

There will be an informal meeting and displays at Autumn Stampex on Saturday 17 September at 1pm. The corresponding meeting in 2014 was well attended, and the Chairman encouraged members to come along and bring some sheets to show.

Although Honiley was a philatelic success, to be to Honiley again or not to be there, that has been something of a question. It has, to be fair, some way from fair declined. Alternatives have been considered, and our next Convention will be held at the Abbey Hotel, Redditch, on the weekend 14th-15th October 2017.

The membership secretary, Steve Jarvis, has kindly supplied the following figures:

Membership Stats as at end of 2015:					
	Members	UK	EUR	RoW	Paperless
End 2014	304	193	20	91	48
Joined 2015	20				
Rejoined	2				
Deceased	2				
Lapsed/Resigned	12				
End 2015	312	200	19	93	63

5. Report by the Editor (Terry Harrison)

Just a brief note to thank all of the last year's authors for their contributions. The regulars came up trumps as always and it was good to receive so many items from new contributors, please keep up the good work.

The last year has seen a significant increase in advertisers which helps to keep the cost of publication down and hopefully this trend will continue.

On the negative side there are still some islands which are under-represented in the Bulletin, surely we have collectors of these areas and I hope that they will accept the challenge to provide me with some snippets, however small, to redress the balance.

Charles Freeland suggested that the respective Study Group leaders could be approached to rustle something up.

6. Report by the Treasurer (Ray Stanton)

The accounts for the year to the 31st December 2015 show a surplus of £3,082 which compares with a similar level of surplus achieved in 2014.

There are three main reasons for the surplus this year. Bulletin advertising has increased from £2,420 to £2,714. In the income statement this advertising income is shown as reducing the Bulletin printing costs, which means that in 2015 the costs are more than fully covered with a surplus of £234. This is of course before the costs of distributing the Bulletin which cost itself is less than 2014 due to the increased number of online only subscriptions.

Secondly there was once again a very substantial donation from the auction team, of a similar amount to that received in 2014. Lastly we also received £723 for articles published in Stanley Gibbons Monthly most of which were initially submitted as part of our 60th Anniversary celebrations the previous year.

The income from sales from publications was significantly higher than 2014, £4,479 compared to £3,605, but less than that spent on new publications. This is of course in line with our publication policy given the current wealth of expertise both in writing and producing new publications.

Regarding expenses, there was a net cost relating to the Honiley convention of £400 largely in respect of room hire, and we also spent more on officer's administration this year, mostly on paper and ink.

Overall, however, this was once again a very successful year financially for the Study Circle and as a result the Accumulated fund has increased to £13,052. This year we have a small gain on the conversion of our US dollar funds but once again, due to the prevailing low interest rates, we have had limited ability to earn any interest.

I would like to thank John Davis once again for being our auditor and for the advice and help he has given.

7. Report by the Librarian (Ian Jakes)

Eight books have been borrowed from the library by one member during the last year. This compares with the borrowing of seven books by three members during the previous year.

Two members have requested copies of articles which have appeared in British Caribbean Philatelic Journal, one member a copy of an article on 1954 Leeward Islands definitives, and the other member copies of seven articles on Antigua cancels.

I corresponded with one member about Jamaica auction catalogues, and eventually supplied him with six sales catalogues on loan. I corresponded with three other members about ship timetables, the philatelist J.H. Rhodes, and forgeries.

Yet another member approached me with a request for identification of an Indian (not West Indian) postmark and a recommended book on early Indian postmarks. The member remarked that BWISC members are often very knowledgeable about other areas of philately. The answers to the requests were given by return of post.

8. Report by the Publications Officer (Peter Ford)

Publications which we published in 2015 included David Horry's book on BWI QEII Postmarks, the Giraldi book on Cayman Islands Postcards and the latest volume of the Jamaica Encyclopaedia on Military Mails by Paul Farrimond and Ray Murphy, this last winning a Gold Medal and a Grand Award for Literature at CHICAGOPEX 2015. Congratulations to the authors! We have two more publications already published this year both of which are available here today. Charles Freeland and John Jordan's definitive work on Antigua and Charles's Classic Collections on St. Lucia, both available today here at a knock-down price for members! Remember, if you buy a copy today you are saving on postage and the authors may even sign your copy!

The publications sales for 2015 were very good with net sales topping £4,400. Sales were helped greatly by us having a table at LONDON 2015 for 4 days; thanks must go to those members who helped man the

table throughout the show. The top seller last year was the Nevis (39 copies) which had been published late in 2014; second came the BWI QEII Postmarks book by David Horry which sold 31 copies. Altogether we sold a total of 222 books during the year; thanks for this is due mainly to our distributor, David Druett.

In the pipeline is a book on the Tudway Letters by Mary Gleadall, one on Turks & Caicos Postcards by a new member, Jeffrey Dodge, and we will soon be starting on Peter Fernbank's Bahamas which promises to be an award-winning publication if his previous Keyplates book is anything to go by. Also it seems that Charles Freeland cannot be stopped and is working on a new definitive handbook on St. Vincent.

All in all, a good year.

9. Report by the Chairman of the Committee (Peter Ford)

After the celebrations of our Diamond Anniversary in 2014, one expected 2015 to be a quiet year. Not so, the Study Circle continues to thrive and, not only did we hold a very successful auction in April, but the Convention at Honiley was a notable one.

The auction realised a figure in excess of £28,000 on the day, this not including the later sales of unsolds. Members may not realise this, but our commission from the auction contributes a large proportion of our income each year, without which the Circle would be hard pressed to make ends meet. Much of the success of the auction goes to our auction team of Nigel Chandler, John Jordan and Simon Richards and, of course, our venerable auctioneer, Simon Goldblatt, whose often amusing descriptions of lots provides us with light relief after a hard winter! May this continue for many years to come. No doubt today's auction will live up to expectations!

The other event was our Convention at Honiley in October where 32 members attended over the two days. Besides the two formal displays, there was a variety of informal ones, in two sessions. The breadth of material on display was amazing and it was good to see some of our newer members standing up to the plate and showing their wares. At the dinner on the Saturday evening, our President Graham Booth announced the winners of the Collett Awards, one to Michael Oliver and the other to Richard Maisel. As usual the dealers were present and had a successful weekend with members not being shy of releasing their hard earned cash. Much of the success of the weekend must go to our Secretary, George Dunbar. Organising these events takes a lot of hard work and George certainly managed it all with great aplomb. My only complaint is that I feel not enough members come to our Conventions. There are many members who live less than an hour's drive from Honiley who do not bother to come along. Can I appeal to those members who live nearby to support the Circle by attending in the future?

The Circle finances continue to show a healthy surplus allowing us to continue with an active series of events without having to worry too much about how to pay for them. The credit for this must go to Ray Stanton, our Treasurer, who keeps us on the straight and level, to use an aeronautical expression.

You will perhaps notice that I have been praising certain members of our Committee. However, all members of the Committee deserve members' appreciation as they all work hard at making our society a success. I haven't asked them their ages, but I am willing to bet that the average age of the Committee members is over 70, and we cannot expect to go on until we drop. The Study Circle needs new blood and in the next year or two, we will be approaching members who we think can help us run what I believe to be the most successful specialist Study Circle in the world. I hope that, if approached, you will give due consideration to such a request. The success of the Study Circle is its own reward.

10. Re-Election of the Chairman of the Committee

Peter Ford was re-elected unanimously as Chairman of the Committee.

11. Re-Election of Officers and election of Simon Richards to the Committee

The existing Officers and Committee Members were re-elected.

John Jordan proposed Simon Richards be elected as a member of the Committee. Ian Jakes seconded the proposal, and Simon was elected unanimously.

12. Election of the Auditor

John Davis was re-elected, with the thanks of members.

13. Other Business

Website for member-to-member sales.

Peter Ford asked for volunteers to assist with the development of a website that would allow members to offer items for sale at a fixed price to other members, with a 10% commission paid by the vendor to BWISC. Items withdrawn or unsold would pay a small fixed amount.

Richard Stupples expressed enthusiasm and volunteered to help. He noted that Paypal fees on top of 10% commission could make transactions costly. The Treasurer emphasised that it would be important to have a secure transaction process. He said it was an interesting idea to pursue, but planning would need to pay careful attention to the structure and organisation of the arrangement. Peter Ford agreed and added that the extension of our auction insurance to this activity would be investigated. This new project would be separate from the Auction.

It was agreed that the Chairman would look into the feasibility of this, and the Committee would decide whether to go ahead at its meeting in 2017.

In response to a question from Michael Hamilton, the Treasurer confirmed that the 10% commission from the members' table at Honiley was included in the Auction donation. This new project would be separate from the Auction.

All business having been covered, the Chairman closed the meeting.

BRITISH HONDURAS OFFERS FROM STOCK

1884 1d rose overprinted 'SPECIMEN' (Type D12). Fine mint. Extremely scarce (just 100 prepared). SG 18s.	£150	1899 25c red-brown and green with 'BEVENUE' error. Very fine used and scarce thus. SG 68a.	£300
1888 3c on 3d chestnut (Perf 14) in block of four. Very fine mint. SG 26.	£500	1913/21 set of 10 overprinted 'SPECIMEN' (Type D12). Unmounted mint. Exceptionally fresh. SG 101s/110s.	£275
1888 20c on 6d yellow in block of four. Unmounted mint. SG 29.	£125	1913 \$2 purple and green. Very fine used on piece with BELIZE c.d.s. 'SP 4 13'. SG 109.	£90
1888 'TWO' on 50c on 1/- grey in block of four. Very fine mint. SG 35.	£275	1916 1c 'WAR' pair with overprint inverted and misplaced so left stamp shows 'AR' only. Only 20 possible! SG 114a.	£375
1888 50c on 1/- grey in block of four. Very fine mint. SG 42.	£150	1917 1c 'WAR' with watermark reversed. Very fine mint. SG 116ax.	£225
1891 5c on 3c on 3d red-brown with 'FIVE' and bar double. Very fine mint. SG 49b.	£250	1935 4c Jubilee with 'double flagstaff' (Plate 6 : R.5/2). Very fine mint. SG 144e.	£275
1899 5c ultramarine with malformed 'S' at right (R.7/3). Very fine mint. SG 66b.	£475	1923 4c Postage Due with watermark inverted. Very fine mint. SG D3bw.	£175

*The above is a selection from my extensive British Commonwealth stock. All items available on approval (subject unsold).
Major credit cards accepted. Illustrated lists on request (please advise collecting interests). Wants lists invited.*

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BRITISH WEST INDIES STUDY CIRCLE
INCOME STATEMENT : YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2015

	£'s	2015	2014
INCOME :			
Subscriptions		4,316	4,291
Publications - Sales less commissions		4,479	3,605
Articles for publication		723	189
Auction donation (net of costs)		2,674	2,586
Other donations		26	510
Interest received		7	4
TOTAL INCOME		12,225	11,185
EXPENDITURE :			
Bulletin - Costs less advertising receipts	(234)		136
Distribution and editorial expenses	2,474	2,240	2,750
Publications : Printing costs		5,217	3,545
60th Anniv dinner - net deficit		-	565
Honiley convention costs net of recovery		400	-
Other room hire & meeting costs		380	298
ABPS affiliation fee		213	223
Officers administration - Stationery, postage, telephone etc		487	69
Bank charges		93	92
Exhibition entry fees		-	25
Website		113	113
		9,143	7,816
SURPLUS INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	£'s	3,082	£'s 3,369

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2015

ACCUMULATED FUND :			
Balance at 1st January 2015		9,852	6,503
Add : Surplus (Deficit) for the year		3,082	3,369
Exchange conversion profit (loss)		118	(20)
	£'s	13,052	£'s 9,852
REPRESENTED BY :			
Cash at banks		11,743	7,580
Debtors - amounts due to us		3,993	6,627
Prepaid expenses		-	200
		15,736	14,407
Less : Subscriptions received in advance	(2,664)		(3,027)
Loan	-		(1,300)
Other creditors - Amounts due by us	(20)	(2,684)	(228)
	£'s	13,052	£'s 9,852

AUDITORS REPORT

I hereby certify that the income statement for the year ended 31st December 2015 is in accordance with the books, vouchers and explanations given to me; and that the Balance Sheet at the 31st December 2015 shows the financial state of the British West Indies Study Circle as at that date.

J G M Davis FCA

John Davis
 29th March 2016

LEEWARD ISLANDS

POSTMARK USAGE OUTWITH GENERALLY ACCEPTED DATES

BY BRUCE STEWART

I have in my Leewards Islands collection a few stamps and some covers where the dates of the postmarks do not fall within the stated usage parameters of either the Earliest Recorded Date (ERD) or Last Recorded Date (LRD) listed in such reference works as *The Postal History of the Leeward Islands* (Edward B. Proud) or *The Leeward Islands: Notes for Philatelists* (Michael N. Oliver).

My first query relates to a copy of SG 26 bearing a '***st End - Tortola', presumably 'West End', postmark of 'AP 19 06'. Oliver records this postmark as V33, and says that it was used between 24 Mar 10 and 07 Oct 26 while Proud records its usage as between 21 Feb 10 and 07 Oct 26. My stamp was therefore used 4 years too early for this postmark type although there was another style in use in 1906. I hope that the postmark is sufficiently clear from the photo. It has always struck me as a bit odd that the stamp is stuck to a piece of lightweight black coloured card. Maybe this was from an envelope enclosing a Condolence Card?



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

The next stamp is a copy of the first printing of the GVI on red paper (Fig. 1). Both Proud and Oliver, as well as other reference sources, say that the ERD for this stamp is 25 November 1938. However my stamp is clearly postmarked 'NO 15 38', presumably at St. John's, Antigua, which is ten days too early. Could this be as a result of a genuine error in the date of the postmark used or a forgery? I really doubt it is a forgery however as using 25 November instead would surely add more value to the stamp being the first day of use.

Moving onto Green Bay in Antigua (Fig. 2) both Proud and Oliver record the postmark as being used between 06 May 31 and 06 Dec 33. However I have a copy of SG 59 used on 'APL 11 34' with the 34 showing upside down. The pair of Antigua 1d stamps in the photo confirm the nature of the postmark although the date of usage is within the currently accepted range. I have read in back issues of the Bulletin that finding the Green Bay postmark used on Leeward Islands stamps is incredibly rare but if this were an instance of 'Cancelled To Order' (CTO) then surely more of the postmark would be better applied to the stamp.

Finally the usage of the St. Phillips postmark (Fig. 3) is given by Proud as between 23 July 1945 and 14 November 1946, while Oliver says that the dates were 11 July 1946 until 14 November 1946. I have two stamps used on separate pieces that clearly show a date of 9 September 1947 and a cover showing 1947 although the day and month are unclear. I have a further two near identical covers, same addressee, where all that is clear from the postmarks are 'St. Phillips', the dates are indistinguishable. I'm prepared to accept however that the stamps used on piece were CTO.

Any advice that members can provide on any of these items would be most welcome.

Stanley Gibbons Auctions

Next sale is August/September 2016 featuring Bermuda



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ST. LUCIA

BOOK REVIEW

BY ALISTER KINNON

‘Classic Collections: St. Lucia’ By Charles Freeland, FRPSL

This is the latest handbook in the series ‘Classic Collections’ published by the British West Indies Study Circle. This is about a collection of Saint Lucia formed by Charles Freeland FRPSL.

The book, of some 18 pages, with many full colour illustrations is produced to the excellent standard associated with Study Circle publications.

The contents, while concentrating mainly on the adhesive stamps of the reign of Queen Victoria nevertheless covers many other fields. The local coastal post of circa 1867 to 1890 is briefly but comprehensively covered and includes illustrations of the rare iconic marks.

Saint Lucia is well known for its typeset postage dues of 1931 to 1933 but almost unknown are their precursor handstamped marks, each of which is illustrated. There are many illustrations of proof and specimen material of interest to a wider range of collectors.

This slim volume gives a very good review of the philately of Saint Lucia and I recommend it to all collectors of Saint Lucia material. To collectors of other territories it is recommended as a guide to potential authors who wish to write about their own collections.

CATALOGUE REVIEW

STANLEY GIBBONS COMMONWEALTH STAMP CATALOGUE, NORTHERN CARIBBEAN, BAHAMAS & BERMUDA.

Published 2016 by SG Publications, ISBN 10: 0-85259-963-3, softback, xxix, 191p.

This fourth edition covers Bahamas, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Jamaica and the Turks and Caicos Islands. Prices have been revised in line with the current market, with some substantial increases since the last edition.

Detailed price listings of British stamps used in Bahamas and Jamaica are included, as well as Jamaica used in the Cayman Islands prior to the issue of their own stamps.

The ‘Crowned circle’ handstamps of Bahamas and Turks Island are listed and priced.

Major plate flaws, watermark varieties, shades, errors, official and postal fiscal stamps (Jamaica), special delivery stamps (Bahamas), express delivery stamps (Bermuda) booklets, telegraph stamps (Jamaica) and stamp booklets are all included.

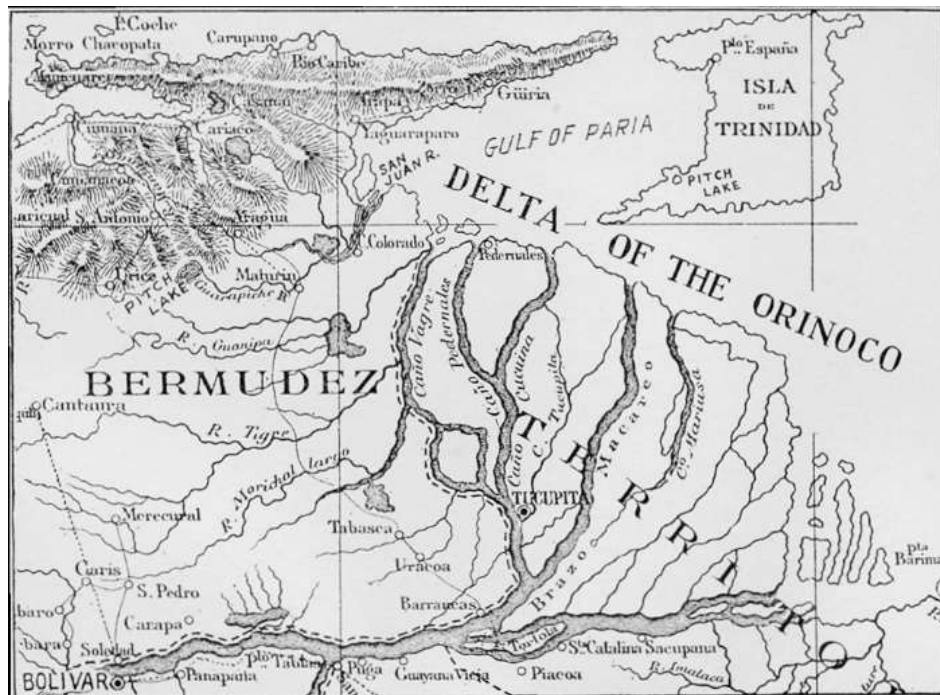
Details of issues up to 1970 have been extracted from the Stanley Gibbons 2016 Commonwealth and British Empire catalogue and later issues have been revised and updated especially for this catalogue.

New varieties added to this edition include watermark varieties in Bahamas and Jamaica. While in Bermuda newly listed plate flaws range from the ‘Flag’ flaw on the 1d Caravel to the ‘Broken cable’ on the 1s telephone service stamp of 1967.

The catalogue has been updated as follows:

Bahamas (to October 2015)	Bermuda (to April 2015)	Cayman Islands (to November 2014)
Jamaica (to December 2014)	Turks and Caicos (to November 2014)	

BY MICHAEL REGO



Sir Ralph Woodford was Governor of Trinidad from 1813 to 1828. This steamer owner wanted to extend the route to the Orinoco, and he wrote to Colonel James Hamilton in Angostura (later Ciudad Bolivar), calculating that the trip from Port of Spain would be at a speed of 6½ miles per hour, using local firewood. In August 1819 the Congress of Angostura gave exclusive rights for a steam line on the Orinoco and its tributaries. A privilege concession from Congress was granted to Colonel James Hamilton, an officer in the Colombian service, for the navigation of the Orinoco and its tributary streams, above the city of Angostura for a period of 10 years. In the terms of this grant, it stipulated that the government had free conveyance of the mails and its troops. Colonel Hamilton, was required, subject to a penalty of \$20,000 and forfeit of his privileges, to remove any obstructions in the river which might prevent its navigation

by steamboats, and to keep freight charges as low as would permit and to place steamboats in the river within two years after the contract date. Hamilton, went on to purchase two steamboats in Great Britain to fulfil this contract, but as they did not leave England until the spring of 1826, he was fined and his privileges were withdrawn.

When Guayana was a department of Gran Colombia, there was a steamboat in the port of Angostura, according to Travera Acosta (in his *Annals of Guayana*), who extracted the following information from a *Journal of February 1831*: 'a steamship left the old British built forts of Guayana to the port of Angostura on the Orinoco. These forts made of Glasgow red brick, were brought in the holds of British ships trading at that time from the UK to Trinidad.'

In 1837 a new Gulf steamer named **Paria** commenced service between Port of Spain and San Fernando. While in service an experiment took place where the engines' fire coal was mixed with pitch tar from Trinidad's Pitch Lake as a substitute for coal. Additional trials took place with a cargo of bitumen being shipped to London for further experiments. The **Paria** passenger and mail service came to an end in the 1840s when she finally ground to a halt in the dockyard of Corbeaux Town (now lower Sackville Street), Port of Spain. Her replacement was the **Lady McLeod** 67 tons paddle steamer owned by Turnbull, Stewart & Co of Trinidad, which was placed in service in 1845 from Port of Spain to San Fernando. Captain David Bryce inaugurated the service on 3 November 1845 with the coastal wood-burning ship on a weekly service carrying passengers and mail. The *Port of Spain Gazette* announced that the steamer would also carry letters and small parcels from San Fernando to Port of Spain. Payment was to be made in cash but very often the ship's captain did not have change and had to refuse customers. In November 1847, Capt. Bryce took ownership of the **Lady McLeod** and after several trips between Port of Spain and San Fernando, he advertised that postal packets could be paid for with local postage stamps for their transmission.

In 1854 on seeing the vessel sinking off the coast in the Gulf of Paria, immigrant workers on the Vistabella Sugar Estate, recovered a large brass bell from the **Lady McLeod**. They realised at the time that nothing could be done to save her, but there were items of value on the steamer that could be saved. The bell was removed from the deck and carried ashore to the estate manager, George Lambie. The replacement steamer on the Port of Spain to San Fernando route was the steamship **Rothesay Castle**. Neither of these vessels however are recorded on the River Orinoco service.

Mail from Ciudad Bolivar to Trinidad (going north) and to British Guiana (going south) is recorded from the 1840s, linking with the Royal Mail Steam Packet BWI homeward service to the UK and onwards to the European mainland. Founded in 1762 the town of Santo Tomé de Guayana de Angostura del Orinoco was renamed Ciudad Bolivar in 1846.

On 14 May 1847 the Venezuelan Congress granted Vespasian Ellis, a former US Charge d'affaires at Caracas, a monopoly contract to the navigation and trade on the Orinoco and Apure Rivers. The Orinoco Steamship Company was formed to work the contract, but no steamers took part in a steamship service. On 2 May 1849 the concession was revoked and granted to Captain Edward Anthony Turpin and Frederick A. Beelan, both US citizens, who founded the Orinoco Steam Navigation Company (1849-66). Their first mail and passenger ship was the **Venezuela**, a side-wheel steamer, which landed on 29 January 1849 at the port of Ciudad Bolivar and began her first sailing in May to Apure. The owners were also associated with the firm Wuppermann & Company, a merchant house in Angostura.

On 30 September 1854, the *Louisiana Courier* reports that 'A letter from Venezuela says that the Orinoco Steam Navigation Company is in a prosperous condition. There are two steamers now plying on the river. The business of the Company is in good hands - its general agent being Captain E. A. Turpin, of Kentucky. All the steamboats are officered, and for the most part manned by Americans. The gold mines at Apata are yielding well.'

Other mail and passenger steamships plying the Orinoco River were to follow; **Barinas**, **Apure**, **Orinoco**, **Guayana** and **Meta**. Due to heavy outlays the steamship service was run down by 1856–57 to leave steamers **Apure** and **Guayana**. Revolution mobs in 1854 seized the **Apure** in the Apure River, and similar calamities took place in 1864 when the Captain and Chief Engineer of the **Apure** were killed. This and other incidents eventually caused the company to close.



21 December 1845, unpaid packet letter, Ciudad Bolivar via Trinidad to Bordeaux
Trinidad (21 Dec), London (20 Jan), Boulogne (23 Jan), Bordeaux (24 Jan). Transit 34 days.

A new shipping firm was established, Venezuelan Steam Transportation Company (1869–71), in New York on 28 April 1869, and an old American paddle-steamer **Hero**, renamed **Heroe**, sailed on 30 July 1869 to Puerto Nutrias. Two other steamships were sent from New York in 1869, the **Nutrias** and the **San Fernando**. The new Company had designs on trading links with Trinidad and Ciudad Bolivar and Nutrias, the gateway to the goldfields. In September the **Nutrias** joined the fleet, and later the **Dudley Buck** (418 tons). The **Dudley Buck** was contracted to carrying government mails under her captain, and plied between La Guaira and Trinidad, while the steamer **Heroe** made connections with the **Dudley Buck** at Port of Spain where it sailed regularly to Ciudad Bolivar. The other steamers **Nutrias** and **San Fernando**, plied between Ciudad Bolivar and Nutrias on the rivers Orinoco and Apure.

The American owner of the VST Company, Mr Joseph Wright Hancox, was an extremely wealthy New Yorker, who had trading links and family with J. N. Harriman Company in Trinidad. Under the American flag, Hancox set up a regular steam communication for mail, goods and passengers between Port of Spain and Ciudad Bolivar. For a brief while this business venture prospered, but in August 1871 there was an uprising of Venezuelan revolutionaries. Having left Port of Spain the **Heroe** was seized by the rebels at Guayana la Viejo, the captain was imprisoned and the ship was used as a war transport for troops. The Venezuelan government acted quickly and seized their other possession the **Nutrias**, removed her captain, and armed the ship to fight a naval battle against her sister ship the **Heroe**. After **Heroes'** failure to sink the **Nutrias** she escaped from Ciudad Bolivar under a fire of musketry and proceeded in charge of her captors to Port of Spain. On her arrival there the master appealed to the commander of the British gunboat **Cherub** for protection. Without receiving any compensation, the firm closed in 1871, and a 25 year litigation process ended up in the law courts in Venezuela and the USA.

In October 1871 the President of Venezuela, Guzmán Blanco closed the Orinoco to all ships, and later that year General Juan Perez awarded a 7-year contract to the Orinoco Navigation Company (1871–83), which was to remain in business until 1883. The fleet comprised of three steamers; **Heroe**, **Nutrias** and **San Fernando**; the former was an old New York steamer built in 1845, while the latter two were recent builds from Delaware and New York.

The following letter is from George Wuppermann & Co. George was born on 22 March 1838 at Angostura (Ciudad Bolivar), his business training began in his father's import/export trade in Hamburg, and then he moved to Manchester in the UK, as an office worker. He sailed in 1863 for Port of Spain, to become a partner in the firm Gerold & Urich, and an agent for the Hamburg American Line, and eventually ran the firm J. N. Harriman & Co., which in 1875 became the sole agent in the West Indies for Angostura Bitters.

In 1878 he went to New York where he established J. W. Hancox as the Angostura Bitters' agency for the U.S. and Canada, while his company in Trinidad continued to be a general shipping agency for various mail shipping lines. George founded a substantial general import/export business in New York dealing with all Spanish-speaking parts of the Americas, but he shut down the firm in 1900, to concentrate on the expansion of Angostura Bitters' sales. His business career extended over 50 years. He died on 12 June 1915 at Westchester County, New York.

(1d)
rose-red
original stamp
removed from
the cover

Pen '10' charge

Red '16' crayon



25 June 1858, (1d) unpaid letter, Ciudad Bolivar via Trinidad & London to Hamburg, Obliterator-1 Trinidad-1 (10 Jul), Trinidad (10 Jul), London (2 Aug), Hamburg (4 Aug). Transit 40 days.



3 February 1861, 5d letter rate, Ciudad Bolivar via Trinidad to St. Thomas. Crown / PAID / AT / TRINIDAD. Red '4' crayon credit to GB sea post. Cd. Bolivar (3 Feb) Trinidad (10 Mar) St. Thomas (16 Mar). Transit 41 days.

No story of the Orinoco Line would be complete without mentioning the British Post Office in London establishing a postal agency at Ciudad Bolívar. In July 1867 the British Vice-Consul in Ciudad Bolívar was authorised as the British postal agent, which allowed merchants to use British mail facilities as a direct link to Port of Spain, Trinidad and beyond. The agency was issued with a D22 oval obliterator together with the Ciudad Bolívar / Paid datestamp and straight-line handstamp SHIP LETTER. The fast postal facility was used by a number of merchants in Ciudad Bolívar, often with their firms' cachet of origin applied to the letters.

The inland Trinidad local postage rate was extended to Ciudad Bolívar at (1d) per ½oz. The Trinidad letter rate announcement of 18 May 1861 was 1d per ½oz charged either for local mail or letters passing through the British colony. The recorded use of the Ciudad Bolívar D22 pre-paid service is from September 1869 to February 1875.



(1d) local fee pre-paid, cancelled D22

Red ink
SHIP LETTER

Blue '2' denotes 2c
(1d) to be paid on
delivery in Trinidad

Firms cachet
R. Y. T. MACHADO

15 July 1873, (1d) letter rate Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela to Trinidad
Obliterator- D22, Ciudad Bolívar (15 Jul), Trinidad (18 Jul). Transit 3 days.

The British steamer plying the Orinoco River at the time was **Regas Farreas**, built in 1860 by E. Stockton, Registered at London for P. Clark & Co. The vessel was 329 tons, and entered the American Directory of Shipping in 1864.

The firm Rafael and Tomas Machado are recorded as merchants and shipping agents at Ciudad Bolívar from 1857 to 1875.

During the brief government of General Crespo in 1884–86, a new firm was established to ply the Orinoco Delta, the General Steamship Company of Venezuela (1883–98) was founded in August 1883, and operated by an American organisation with Elisha Lee as manager. The steamers were **Heroes of April** (formerly **Heroe**), **Nutrias** 200 tons and **San Fernando** 40 tons, and in the following year **Apure** and **Freedom** brought the river service to the Apure and Masparro Rivers, respectively. In 1889 two new steamers arrived at Ciudad Bolívar from Trinidad, the **Guanare** and **Socorro**; they were brought to Venezuela to navigate the Apure, Guanare, Cojedes, Portuguesa and Masparro Rivers. The Company Apure Navigation Vapores and Zamora was registered at Ciudad Bolívar on 4 August 1890 with a capital of 312,000 bolívars. The contract signed with the government gave exclusive rights to steam navigation for a period of 20 years. This fleet was to merge with steamships **Apure** and **Nutrias** 200 tons to form the Orinoco Red Star Steamship Line.

On 17 January 1894, the British-American company founded the Orinoco Shipping & Trading Company (1894-1902) and signed for concessions with the Minister of Interior of Venezuela and Ellis Grell, a British

merchant and entrepreneur living in Trinidad. In June 1884 Ellis Grell obtained Venezuelan government grants on a monthly subsidy of 4000 bolivars (US \$800) to transport mails, goods and passengers, and government troops in cases of international warfare.

Article 4 of the contract reads; The 'Contractor undertakes to transport free of charge, the mail bags which may be placed on board the steamers by the Authorities and merchants through the respective post-offices; the steamers thereby acquiring the character of mail steamers, and, as such, being exempted from all national dues.'

The Orinoco Shipping & Trading Company went on to develop the mineral and agricultural resources of the Upper Orinoco Region, and acquired on 12 December 1898 all the shares of the General Steamship Company of Venezuela and full control of the Orinoco Red Star Steamship Line (1890–98) and an all-out purchase of the paddle steamers **Bolivar** and **Delta**. The firm had its registered office in London, and principal office in Port of Spain, but US stocks controlled 99% of the business in New York. From this time the Orinoco Shipping & Trading Company operated a regular fortnightly service becoming a weekly service from Port of Spain to Ciudad Bolivar, connecting with the RMSP ships in Trinidad, with mixed success. The **Manzanares** ocean mail steamer service left Trinidad for Carupano, Margarita, Cumana, Guanta and La Guiana on alternate Thursdays after arrival of the RMSP ship with the British Mail, returning to Trinidad on Friday of the following week; mail, goods and passenger service was fitted throughout with electric light. The **Bolivar** and **Delta** took turns on the Orinoco river steamer service that left Trinidad on alternate Wednesdays on arrival of the British Mail for Ciudad Bolivar, stopping at Barancas and returning to Trinidad on Thursdays of the following week, connecting with the outward RMSP. The Agents were Messrs Ellis Grell & Co.

The nine steamships were **Bolivar** (600 tons), **Manzanares** (1004 tons), **Delta** (500 tons), **Apure** (350 tons), **Guanare** (200 tons), **Socorro** (40 tons), **Masparro** (25 tons), **Heroe** (80 tons) and **Morganito**. These steamships were designed for coastal service, some to navigate the rivers, Guanare, Cojedes, Portuguesa and Masparro from Ciudad Bolivar up to the mouth of the Uribante River, as originally agreed on 27 June 1891, and the other steamers were to navigate between Ciudad Bolivar and Maracaibo and to call at the ports of La Vela, Puerto Cabello, La Guaira, Guanta, Puerto Sucre and Carupano, as the Grell contract of 8 June 1894. All official mail to be transported free. This line was also granted by government the option of calling at the ports of Willemstad, Curaçao and Port of Spain.

The Bolivar district of Venezuela has long been the chief source of beef supply for Trinidad, the cattle being shipped by steamer on the Orinoco and slaughtered locally on the outskirts of Port of Spain. At the capital city of Trinidad nearly all Ciudad Bolivar exports and imports, including those coming in by coastwise traffic, connected with the flat-bottom paddle-steamer Orinoco steamer **Delta**.



Corbeaux Town, painting by Michel Cazabon (1813–1888)

In the late 1890s the steamboats from the Orinoco, Venezuela use to land in the bay of Corbeaux Town, Port of Spain, and discharge the live cattle into the shallow waters where they walked them ashore. The Corbeaux Town harbour covered several streets which terminated here, Charles St., Prince Street St., London Street and the towns jetty was situated opposite to Charles Street. This remained until the Port of Spain harbour was reclaimed and extended in the 1930s.

The sea here was very shallow, and required a proper landing place nearby for passengers, mail and goods at a wooden jetty at the foot of St. Vincent Street.

Not long after the steamship line was established the ships were obstructed during another revolution which broke out in the Ciudad Bolívar area. On 19 October 1899 the steamer **Vencedor** (285 tons), was taken by force at Porlamar and held in possession of the government until the 10 February 1900. Consequently the River service was badly affected with government interruptions transporting troops and the rebels capturing other ships and maltreating the crews. When the Venezuelan government finally took control of the province, it claimed that the steamship company was aiding the revolutionists, and that lie was often used in later meetings with the then ruling dictator.

During 1896 there were fifteen steamships plying the Orinoco River operated by three companies.



Route of letter

Caracas — La Guaira via Venezuelan sea coastal service, then linking with the Royal Netherlands Steamship Company (KWIM) service La Guiana — Trinidad — British Guiana — Suriname.




Fig. 200. — Puerto d'España nell'isola Trinidad.

To be continued.

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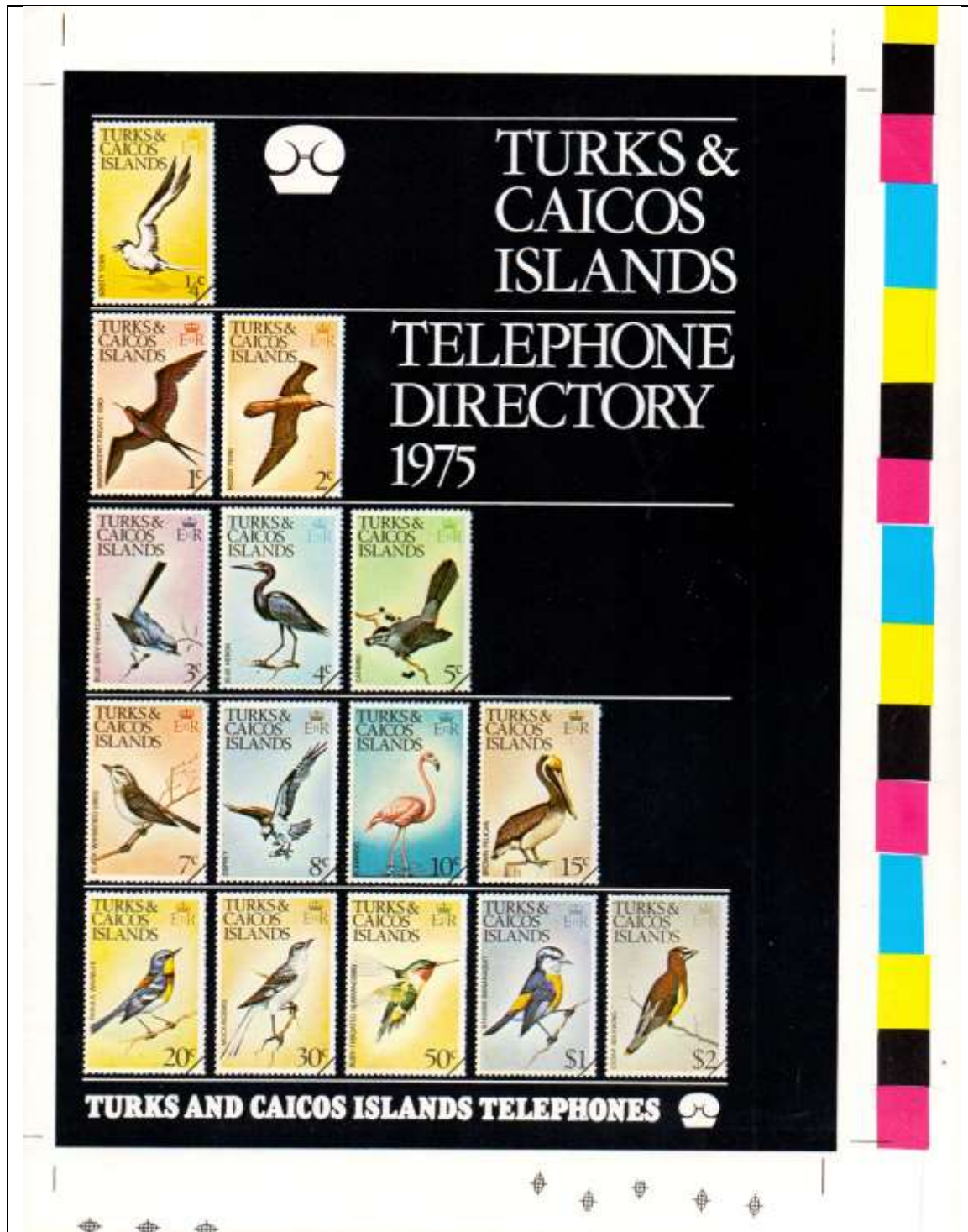
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STAMPS OR ADVERTISEMENTS

The Government of The Turks and Caicos Islands was always keen to advertise this British Colony.

The then Governor, Arthur Watson, approved the use of the current definitive range of stamps of beautiful birds for use on the front cover of the Turks and Caicos Islands Telephone Directory 1975.



The picture shows the original Printers Proof. Please note that each stamp has a short diagonal stroke on all the bottom right hand corners (I wonder why!)

AUCTION UPDATE**BY CHARLES FREELAND**

At the end of a fairly flat year, things picked up in November with a string of intriguing sales right up to the end of January. While prices of the more 'investment' type of material have plainly been weakening quite sharply, more specialised 'collector' lots have mostly continued to sell well, though it is horses for courses with some countries currently not the flavor of the month. Still, there are signs of life in Bermuda and Grenada and enthusiasm remains for the smaller islands in the Leewards group (Virgin Islands notably excepted).

Grosvenor 11–12 November (BP 19%)

Anyone present at the sale of Stella Pearse's Antigua will have concluded that the BWI market is alive and well. How it would have fared without an extremely strong book bidder who bought nearly all the postal history and many of the stamp lots is a moot point. But that is how the sale went and it was a great result for Stella's heirs and the auction house. The first lot was the 1693 cover, the earliest known, and this opened and closed at £2k, double the upper estimate and five times the price it achieved in the Toeg sale. The other 30 lots of early postal history, which was Stella's main interest, all went above (and often two or three times) what I thought were accurate estimates even though none of the really rare marks were included. The prices of the large fleurons were surprisingly high but the crowned circles a little disappointing by comparison. Our members John Jordan and Simon Richards did not get a lot of joy, nor indeed did I.

The stamps were quieter with half a dozen unsolds. The best price was £3.5k for a undenominated QV key plate colour trial in purple, while an imperf 1913 5s was £650, both surprisingly high considering the weak prices for similar items in the Vestey sales. The Perkins Bacon 6d die proof was a fair £1.2k but the sloping '2' on 2½d red-brown CC watermark ex Mayer (from a different source) was unsold, as were mint blocks of the 2½d brown and the 1932 Tercentenary set. The few stamped covers all sold, the dubious English Harbour ex Toeg for £4k and a pretty 1886 printed matter rate to Demerara for £900. Elsewhere two rare 1920 British Honduras booklets were £1.55k for the one containing the 2c scarlet and £3.5k for the booklet with the 2c brown, while a mint corner strip of 1923 St. Lucia 5s from plate 21 was £200.

Stanley Gibbons 30 November–1 December (BP 18%)

A small assembly of early Dominica preadhesive covers provided two significant surprises for whoever estimated them. A 1798 front and small part back with a straight line handstamp, ex the Urwick collection, was £1.4k against an estimate of £40–44, while a strong but oily 1807 fleuron was £750. An 1889 cover to St. Kitts franked with a ½d and four 1ds was an equally surprising £1.1k, but the rest of the lots went for regular prices.

Cavendish 2–3 December (BP 19%)

In a strong postal history offering, our members Graham Booth, Michael Hamilton and James Podger were among those scrambling for a nibble at a decent Antigua collection of early covers, which detective work following the sale revealed had been consigned by former member Derek Seaton. Unlike the Pearse sale, the spoils were well divided with an agent in the room buying many of the lots, but each of our three members in the room ended up with at least one Antigua cover. None of the items were enormously rare but the prices were generally above reasonable estimates, a fair PD6 and a Crowned Circle to St Kitts topping the list at £600, the same price for a stamp lot containing a superb A18 on a GB 6d and an English Harbor cds on a 1d adhesive.

In a separate catalogue for the Ben Palmer Aussie States, the NSW to Nevis cover illustrated on page 131 of our Nevis handbook fetched £2.2k.

Victoria Stamp Company 5 December (BP 15%)

For once Phoebe did not offer a major one country BWI collection but as always her catalogue was sprinkled with enticing tidbits, with strength in GVI and 'back of the book' material. 80 lots of Bermuda nearly all sold, the best price being \$1.3k for a preadhesive cover with a fine P1 cancel. 90 odd lots of Br. Guiana contained fine studies of the 1882 Baldwin issue and the 'Officials', where \$2.25k was paid for a mint SG 05. A British Honduras study collection of the GVI definitives surprised at \$1.8k on a catalogue price of £500 odd.

In a strong range of Cayman Is rarities the 1907 1d on 5s double overprint used (thinned) sold for \$6k and a mint plate block of the rare War Tax for \$3k, but two lots of the same stamp used, one the unique block and the second on cover, were both unsold. In Grenada, a fine Carriacou straight line cover was \$4.25k and the unissued SG 3a in a lovely mint block \$3k. Leeward Is. offered the discovery copy of the GV 2d MSCA mint with watermark reversed, which fetched \$600. Two rare covers with straight line Montserrat were \$1.5k and \$2.25k and a similar marking from St. Kitts \$1.1k. Of two fine St. Vincent items, the oval ship letter cover ex Jaffé was unsold but the GVI 10s with inverted watermark used matched its \$2.5k estimate.

Siegel 9-10 December (BP 15%)

This worldwide offering under the Charles Shreve label had two offerings of interest to our Jamaica enthusiasts: the 1s inverted frame ex Mahfood went for \$15.5k and the numeral collection from the same source was \$6.25k against an estimate of \$10-15K.

Spink 10 December (BP 20%)

The third and last sale of the Vestey collection with BWI interest offered 216 choice lots of Bermuda, The main strength was in essay and proof material, much as in the earlier Vestey BWI collections, but this also had significant content from the modern era with over 70 GV lots and almost as many GVI. In this period, bidding was strong and few items went unsold, even though hardly any of the lots were unmounted, while some of the specialised lots fetched a multiple of estimate, confirming that the Bermuda market has firmed up following many years of indigestion. However, the estimates had been significantly reduced from those I first saw so the results were on the whole no great surprise.

The final take for the sale as a whole was just over £300k. One member spent over £55k and another around £30k. But the results were heavily influenced by the two great rarities that comprised about half the pre-sale value; the cover ex Tucker and Chartwell bearing a 1853 Postmaster and the vertical block of 6 of the unissued 1874 3d on 1d ex Ludington and Saul. Both these sold at their reserves (£80k and £40k respectively). Given the fact that nearly all lots sold, Spink would have been well satisfied with the result. However, a closer look showed that virtually all the lots went below their acquisition cost, even without taking the premiums into account.

As has become customary in the era of internet and phone bidding, the room was almost empty with just a few dealers present, but we now know that several BWISC members were active on the book, phone or internet. Apart from the two 'big' items mentioned about half a dozen BWISC members bidding on the book or the phone managed to secure at least 60% of the other lots sold. I say 'at least' because the young lady reading the internet numbers spoke very softly and it was often impossible to know which internet bidder had acquired many of the lots. The highlights were £650 for a corner block of the 1886 2d blue showing current number 32 (ex Saul) and the two GV colour trial proofs in vermilion and black (at £3k versus the Ludington price of £1.2k). Upper left plate blocks of the first printings of the GVI 2s to 10s fetched about five times their ridiculously low estimates. The GV die proofs were pretty strong and in the QV era the wonderful range of essays and proofs nearly all sold although many at the opening reserve price when the buyer probably would have gone far higher.

Feldman 11 December (BP 20%)

The second part of the 'Tatiana' collection did not live up to the broad range of the first part. The only really important collection was the Virgin Islands, where a decent range of sheets and proofs was on offer. None of the prices were outstanding but nearly all the lots sold which was unusual for this currently unfashionable island. Although I fear irrelevant for our members, the Missing Virgin was unsold in the room but apparently sold after the sale for £100k, while the unused Bermuda Postmaster was £60k and the used £44k...there are still some big hitters out there. In Tobago the only fine copy of the ½d double overprint on 4d grey in private hands looked a bargain at £1.1k but four Br Honduras early imperfs were sold at one third what they fetched at our member Simon Richards' auction in 2005. The fourth Barbados 1s error of colour to have been offered in recent months, ex Del Harris, was announced by Feldman as having margins added and faked perfs, so fetched a nominal £1.1k.

Murray Payne 26 January (no BP)

This was a good test of the GVI market with a wide range of lots across the Caribbean. Unmounted specimen sets of Coronation and Victory commems were popular, each authenticated by MP's expert John Cruttenden. In Bermuda MP proved they can sell postal history rarities when the K1 5 cancel on a QV 1d fetched £275, while the 1943 £1 with Pos.1 flaw was a healthy £3.1k for a marginal u/m example and a nice U/M marginal block of the 2s6d line perf including Pos. 54 £1.4k.

Spink 27–8 January (BP 20%)

The most substantive offering in this sale was an important collection of Grenada stamps, most of which had not been offered in auction since the Harmers auction of the Clutterbuck collection in 1951. The highlights were a Perkins Bacon Cancelled on the 1d value that went for £5.2k and a fine pair of SG imperf between at £1.9k. Two large blocks of 60 of SG 44 and 45 with flaws were £1.6k and £1.5k. All these were bought by a strong phone bidder who bore Joseph Hackmey's hallmarks. Elsewhere, our members' main interest would have been in a few Vestey Antigua and Bahamas unsolds reoffered at often significantly lower reserves, but many still remained unsold. However, the main Vestey leftovers were in Virgin Is. where your scribe scored a few hits as outside interest was meagre. The top price was £1.6k for the spectacular imperf plate block of the QV 2½d red-brown while the two unique Waterlow die proofs in black setenant on card were £1.1k.

Spink New York 11 May (BP 20%)

The Betty Rhoads Wright collection of Cayman Islands contained 44 specialised lots, highlighted by Jamaica used in Caymans and a good range of the rural posts. The best lot was a fine example of the boxed Cayman Brac on cover ex Watkins at \$11.5k, a used 1907 1d/5s double overprint was \$5.5k and a neat West Bay rural on a 1/4d postcard \$3.75k.

Future events (see also the ads in this bulletin)

In their 8 June Rarities sale Feldman are advertising the 'Tatiana' British Guiana....plainly a red letter event for our many BG fans. Let's hope it ends more happily than the Dupont.

On 15 June Cavendish will offer the "Longtail" Bermuda early Postal History, including lots of high-powered items.

On 18 June a Victoria Stamp Co. sale will feature the Robert de Keyser Leeward Islands collection, highlights of which featured in our RPS display in November 2014. Later in the year Phoebe will have the Roger West Dominica and my Antigua and Barbuda collections.

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